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PRIVACY CHANNEL ~~TOP SECRET~~/SENSITIVE January 26, 1972

ACTION: THE WHITE HOUSE 0032

EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER FROM BUNKER

1. Herewith second and final draft of President Thieu's speech.

BEGIN TEXT.

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By KBH, NARA, Date 6/2/99

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Second DRAFT OF PRESIDENT THIEU'S SPEECH

My fellow countrymen,

Dear Combatants and cadres,

I would like today to present to you the problem of Peace and the situation of the country in the forthcoming days.

People from all walks of life, from the urban to the rural areas, from the rich to the poor, from the combatants and cadres to the civilians, whether they find themselves in the darkest hours our country has known in the last 5 or 6 years or in the relatively bright days now, at any moment, you like myself, everyone of us is yearning for peace, speak about peace, want a real and lasting peace, and devote all their thoughts to find the way to restore peace soon ~~early~~.

For this reason, we do not merely pay lip service, we do not merely think, but on the contrary, we have taken several ~~and~~ positive actions with all our goodwill, with all our attention, with reasonable and logical proposals, with conciliatory settlements, with the determination to substitute love for hatred between the Vietnamese on each ~~this and that~~ side of the division line, on each ~~this side and that~~ side of the front line.

- I believe that today I do not need to waste any more of your time as Tet is coming near, by recalling all the proposals, all the initiatives, listing all the concrete actions concerning the end of the war and the restoration of peace which we and our Allies have taken and proposed at the conference table. In summary, besides the

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comprehensive peace plans which our side has proposed and reiterated each week at the Paris peace talks, there are more concrete measures proposed such as the immediate ceasefire without preliminary conditions in Viet Nam or throughout Indochina, the exchange of all prisoners of war without waiting for the end of the war, or at least the exchange of sick and ~~mutilated~~ wounded prisoners - an entirely humane action.

- We have not only made those proposals, but we have taken concrete actions, that is we have liberated North Vietnamese prisoners and prisoners in South Viet Nam on .... times. Todate these exceed ..... people.

- Also, todate, there have ..... peace initiatives and proposals -- global or partial.

- Also, todate these proposals have been repeated to the other side as many times as there have been meetings.

- But regretfully, todate the other side has responded with no goodwill nor action either for the big or small problems.

- On the contrary, during the last three years, at the Paris peace talks, they have only known and done two things : to berate our side, and to take advantage of the forum to make ~~their~~ propaganda. Even when they made irrational and insolent proposals, we did not systematically discard them, but we took time to study them before we gave our answers or asked for further details. Most striking evidence is about the s n-point proposal they made in July, 1971

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At the same time all the proposals ~~[illegible]~~ we made were rejected and criticised by them as soon as they were made.

It has been ~~goes~~ the same ~~way~~ at the meetings. Anyone who observes their attitude, listens to their speeches, realises that they used completely insolent language in response to decent attitude and language.

- We can say that all our goodwill has been aswered by their lack of goodwill.

- So many positive actions on our part are answered by their negative attitude.

- So many efforts on our part to end the war soon are answered by as many subversive actions. on their part.

- Even in the truces, while we observed the truces, they used and violated them.

IN SUMMARY,

They ask for only one condition and that is that we surrender to them. They pursue only one action and that is to expand the war and win over us militarily.

- They have ~~only~~ but one target and that is to wipe out independence, freedom and democracy in South Viet Nam and ~~take over~~ impose on us ~~by~~ their communist ideology.

- They have only one policy, that is to force the people

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of South Viet Nam to agree with what they want without giving the people of South Viet Nam the freedom to choose what they want.

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- But despite this, we are not discouraged in our pursuit of peace and we will never drop our goodwill for peace.

- But despite this, we still sit at the Paris peace conference and continue to offer initiatives one after another, to make proposals one after another.

- Since we, the people from all walks of life, you like myself, consider that the task of ending the war, restoring peace in the face of a stubborn aggressor is not an easy one and cannot be accomplished quickly.

- Although the war that we have to endure has lasted all too long, although we have sustained all too much suffering, although too much of our blood and resources have been wasted, we have not the right to be discouraged in our struggle for self-defence, just as we do not have the right to be discouraged in our search for peace.

- For this reason and because I share the people's worries and expectations, I, the leader, the one responsible, with the heavy responsibility of the leader in war time, that is to restore peace as soon as possible, I have not discarded any opportunity, any solution which might lead to peace not only in recent times but six, seven years ago from the time I began to shoulder that responsibility.

- For that very reason, in many efforts I made immediately after I took my first term of office to honour the promise I had made during the campaign. I had asked the Pope to convey a letter

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to the leader of North Viet Nam to propose to negotiate peace. But this effort also failed.

- For the same reason, among the many peace plans, which we have proposed on July 11, 1969, I myself boldly offered solution of free election in Viet Nam to seek a breakthrough for the peace negotiations and a settlement of the war in a moderate and conciliatory way, a solution which the Communists have spoken of earlier.

- For this reason, besides the public proposals made at the conference table in Paris, I have agreed with the American government in privately making many other proposals in our secret ~~talks~~ meetings with them.

- For that same reason, On March 25, 1969 I msyelf publicly suggested I would see, talk privately with the other side anywhere, anytime, with anyone, including with people of the so-called National Liberation Front.

- For that same reason, I instructed Ambassador Pham Dang Lam and the other members of the South Viet Nam delegation never to hesitate to see the other side privately; on the contrary, they must seek ways to create such opportunities for ~~of~~ private meetings.

- For that same reason, besides the members of the delegation, I did not hesitate to let people who are their friends of long standing ~~date~~, or other intermediaries or whoever can volunteer to meet privately with them and hold open discussions and try to know more what they want and to inform them further on what they want to know.

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Our side is still making efforts in this field.

- All those private meetings, the American government has held them all together 12 times. The last one took place ~~three~~ four months ago, to propose to them a peace solution with our coordination and approval. We had to choose the private channel because we had hoped that the private meetings will create a more favorable atmosphere for the discussions to be more useful and thus lead to concrete results much faster.

- But todate, all official and private talks have been in vain because not only all the proposals and plans from our side are ignored by the other side, are given no serious consideration but the other side at times lacks total goodwill.

- Therefore, the time has come, especially at the very moment when they respond to the efforts for peace actions from our side by escalating the war in Laos and the Khmer Republic, by enlarging and lengthening the Ho Chi Minh trail, by increasing their infiltration more than ever into South Viet Nam, by concentrating troops, small and big weapons, including several armored units, anti aircraft units, missiles, and several divisions in the area facing the 17th parallel and the High Plateaux, President Nixon and myself have agreed to present publicly all the works done privately for the peoples of America and South Viet Nam to know them.

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- I wish here to explain the essence of the new peace solution I just mentioned.

- Before I present that new peace solution, I wish to recall here the solution offered by our government almost two and a half years ago, on July 11, 1969 concerning a practical political solution for South Viet Nam aimed at solving peacefully the present conflict.

- That solution is based on the principle of the right of self-determination of the people of South Viet Nam, their right to determine the future of their country in a free and democratic manner, free from whatever threat or pressure. That solution is attained by way of a free, democratic election based on the following principles :

1/ All political forces in South Viet Nam, including the so-called National Liberation Front are allowed to participate in the election provided they renounce violence and pledge to honour the results of the election.

2/ To guarantee that the elections are held correctly, an Electoral committee may be set up in which all the political forces including the so-called National Liberation Front may have their representative.

This committee will provide equal opportunities for the candidates during their campaigning.

This committee is also entitled to supervise the voting and the counting of votes to make sure that all the voters are free to

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cast their votes and that the counting of votes is carried out correctly.

3/ An international body will be set up to supervise the election and to guaranty that the election is organised in a correct manner for everyone.

4/ We are willing to discuss with the other side ~~about~~ the time-table and modalities of organising the elections.

5/ Following the election, there will be no vengeance nor discrimination.

6/ The government of the Republic of Viet Nam pledges to honour the election returns whatever they may be.

But to this date many people still ask questions on one problem. That is to elect whom? To elect what body? When to elect? Who will organize the election? Who can participate in the election? Who cannot? etc.

In the solution proposed on July 11, 1969, we have made clear to the other side that we are ready to discuss with them ~~on~~ the time-table and the modalities of the election and we have called upon them to sit down and hold immediate and open discussions with us. However, we all know that they rejected our solution right after July 11, 1969, and to this date they still refuse to consider and discuss it.

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Thus, in the new peace solution I proposed, I have given the answers to the above-mentioned essential points :

- We are ready to resign to have a new election of the President and Vice President in South Viet Nam.

- The election will be witnessed by international observers.

- The election will be organized and run by an independent body. This body, which I have previously named the Electoral Committee will now also include the representatives of all the political forces in South Viet Nam, including the so-called NLF.

- One month before the new election, Vice President Tran Van Huong and I will resign. From that moment, a caretaker government which I propose to be headed by the President of the Senate will assume the government's responsibilities, except the electoral responsibility which is the sole responsibility of the above-mentioned independent body.

This new election will take place six months after a Final Agreement on a comprehensive solution including all the military and political aspects is signed based on the following main basic principles :

- All the US and Allied troops will withdraw out of SVN
- There will be a ceasefire throughout Indochina and there will be no infiltration of men and weapons in any country.
- There will be an exchange of all prisoners.

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- The basic principles of the 1954 Geneva Accords on Indochina and the 1962 Geneva Accords on Laos will be observed.
- There will be an international supervision for the military aspects of this Agreement, including the ceasefire and its provisions, the release of prisoners, the withdrawal of outside forces from Indochina and the implementation of the principle that all armed forces of the Indochinese countries can only remain within their national frontiers.
- There will be an international guarantee for the basic rights of the Indochinese people, for the status of all the countries in Indochina and for a lasting peace in this zone.
- The reunification of Viet Nam is determined on the basis of discussions and agreement between North and South Viet Nam, free from ~~precsion~~ pressure or annexation from any country and free from outside interference.
- The Indochinese countries will settle their problems on the basis on the respect ~~of~~ for Independence sovereignty, and territorial integrity and non-interference in the own affairs of each country.

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~~My fellow~~-cpuntrymen,

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My fellow countrymen,

In summary, the new election in South Viet Nam is a political solution in the comprehensive solution to settle the war and restore a Peace with guarantees and a lasting Peace in Viet Nam and in Indochina in which the people of South Viet Nam have all the rights to determine freely and democratically their own political future without any form of outside interference.

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What can be considered as the most important and generous part of the new peace plan which I have proposed is the new election of the President and Vice President in SVN after a lasting and guaranteed Peace has been restored.

The points I have proposed a new on that election are to complement and better clarify my proposal of July 11, 69.

This new peace plan will be presented by Ambassador Pham Dang Lam, the head of our delegation at the Paris talks at the session on Thursday January 27, along with the head of the American delegation.

We have to make public what we have proposed privately because the time has come when we realize that the private talks which we had chosen have been exploited by the other side to their advantage and they even distorted our show of goodwill.

We cannot let our opponents exploit our goodwill for Peace any longer while they continue to use the conference table as a forum for their propaganda and for them to intoxicate the world opinion into believing that we ourselves have brought about the deadlock of the peace talks.

For over two and a half years, from the day I made the July 11, 69 proposal, there has not been a single week when our delegation did not remind them to discuss that proposal ; there has not been a single Message in which I did not call upon them to discuss that proposal.

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Today, we are waiting for their attitude after this Thursday's session on January 27, 72. And I also reaffirm today that anytime, anywhere and through any means of communications, we stand ready to discuss seriously this proposal with them as well as any other problems when they decide to show their goodwill for serious discussions.

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Conclusion

- brief analysis of the situation in the coming days
- emotional appeal
- emphasize on the sacrifice of ~~the~~ my personal situation for the Peace of the country
- appeal for unity, and for the people to be vigilant

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My fellow countrymen,

Before I conclude my talk today, once again I deem necessary to present clearly the problem to you as well as to the international opinion.

All the people in SVN have fought and are still fighting for so many years just for the safeguard of our Independence and Freedom.

Along with our struggle for legitimate self-defense and the efforts to lead to self-sufficiency and self-reliance, the RVN ceaselessly seeks the measures to ~~soon~~ quickly end the war in the spirit of national reconciliation and on the principle of the sefl-determination of our people.

For that reason, we have made countless liberal proposals to restore Peace. We have stated that we are ready to negotiate without preliminary conditions with the authorities in North Viet Nam the mutual problems between the two zones. We have also said clearly that we are ready to talk without preliminary conditions with the representatives of the so-called NLF on the internal problems of SVN.

- On July 11, 1969 we offered a concrete, very conciliatory and logical solution to solve the internal political problems in SVN by a free and democratic election in which they can participate.

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- However, they still say that they will not have equal opportunities in the election if I, President Nguyen Van Thieu is still leading the government and the Nation.

- To show our utmost goodwill in restorating Peace to the nation and contributing in the restoration of Peace to this entire region, I have made a new proposal to complement the July 11, 1969 proposal on a political solution in order to settle the actual conflict.

That is, in the framework of a comprehensive military and political solution for the Viet Nam and Indochina problem, within 6 months after an agreement is signed a re-election of the President and Vice-President will be organized in SVN ~~by~~ in a completely free and democratic way and with international supervision as I have explained in detail in the first part of this speech.

If the other side agrees to this solution, to assure the utmost impartiality of the election, Vice President Tran Van Huong and I will be ready to resign one month before election day.

If the other side agrees to sign the above agreement to lead to Peace, then the Government will soon send to the National Assembly to be ratified within the constitutional rights.

The RVN considers the above proposal as a concrete and comprehensive solution based on the principle of self-determination of the people to solve the war in VN, bring back a fair and lasting Peace to this region.

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The RVN believes that all the Vietnamese people will realize clearly our utmost goodwill, and hopes that the other side will respond quickly.

The RVN calls upon all the countries and peoples in the world to support this most liberal solution of the RVN for Peace to be restored soon in this part of the world.

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My fellow countrymen,

Combatants and Cadres,

As I have stated many times, I am ready to sacrifice everything which concerns me, if that sacrifice helps in bringing early Peace to the country and the people.

You still recall that in my campaigning for the second term of office, in my first letter to the voters, I had explicitly said :

"My sole and eager aspiration ~~in~~ is to keep this fortunate South from falling into the hands of the Communists, and to bring back to the people of SVN a Peace which guarantees Freedom and Prosperity for the people. and "If you express your confidence in me to continue for another 4 years, I will also devote all my mind and make all efforts to Restore Peace to the country".

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I have stated further :

"To show that I do not want to be President for the prestige and power, if in the course of my next term I can bring back peace to the country anytime, then at that moment I would ask your permission to return to the civilian life to let you choose a new leader"

In the inaugural message I delivered to the Nation on October 31, 71 I also recalled that my eager aspiration is to soon bring back Peace with guarantee, and that I promise to make efforts to seek all ways to lead to Peace.

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Since I do not want my words to be a hollow promise, before I began this second term of office, I had once again boldly made this new proposal on a solution to restore Peace.

I think that my own personality does not count ; rather the affairs of the nation are much more important.

I consider that the title of President, or the term of a President do not count, rather the supreme interests of the nation and the Peace for the people do count.

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If I have to sacrifice my personal situation, whether it is a situation the people have vested ~~on~~ in me then I think that you gave me this situation for me to fulfill my responsibilities - the most important being the safeguard of the Nation and the early restoration of Peace with guarantees, then I should think that it is more noble to fulfill my responsibilities than to maintain my position.

I also think that the sacrifice I have to accept is quite small compared with the immense sacrifice which countless people, ~~xxxxx~~ soldiers have to accept every day and for over 10 years.

Consequently, Vice President Tran Van Hương and I are ready to accept this sacrifice to have a new election, if this new election truly brings back to the nation a genuine Peace with guarantee which we all have longed for.

Thank you and goodbye.

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